

ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANISATIONS WORKING FOR CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN INDIA

—MANORAMA JAJA

There are three types of organisations working for children's literature:

- organisations working exclusively for children's literature in different languages.
- organisations working in the field of children's literature at the national level with English as the working language.
- literary organisations which take up subjects and themes connected with children's literature occasionally and organize seminars or give awards.

Assamese is spoken in the northeast of India in the state of Assam. *Assam Sahitya Sabha* (Assam Literature Association) was founded in 1917. They took keen interest in the development of children's literature and also started a fund called Kamala Devi Memorial Fund specially for the development of children's literature. They instituted annual awards for the best book for children in Assamese and gave special encouragement to science writing.

Assam Publication Board, a government organisation, brings out illustrated books in

Assamese and plans to publish for tribal children in tribal dialects from *Boro*, *Dimoch*, *Kurbi*, *Miching* and *Rabha*.

Bengali has a rich tradition in children's literature. *Bangala Shishu Sahitya Parishad* (Bangala Children's Literature Association) at Calcutta is devoted to the development and promotion of children's literature.

Gujarat Bal Sahitya Sabha is a recently formed organisation by Gujarati speaking writers. They organize seminars and story-telling programmes for the promotion and propagation of children's literature.

Hindi is our national language, spoken by 45 percent of the Indian population. *Bhartiya Bal Sahitya Shiksha Parishad* (Indian Council of Child Education) based in Delhi, started its activities in 1980. They have published a "Who's Who of Children's Writers, Editors and Illustrators" in 1985 and organised an All India Conference in 1989.

Bhartiya Bal Kalyan Sansthan (Children's Welfare Organization) based in Kanpur, was established in 1980. They honour selected writers annually. They also bring out a Hindi monthly, *Bal Sahitya Samiksha* (Children's Literature Review).

Hindi Academy, Delhi, awards prizes to children's writers every two years.

Kannada speaking writers formed the *Kannataka Makkala Sahitya Academy* (Kannataka Children's Literature Academy) at Bijapur. They encourage the development and popularisation of children's literature and aim to cooperate with other State language organisations. They hold conferences and seminars.

Bal Sahitya Co-operative Society Ltd in Malayalam is based at Kottayam in Kerala. They devote themselves to the publication of children's literature and take an interest in the promotion of writers.

Kerala's State Institute of Children's Literature was established by the State Government of Kerala in 1981 at Thiruvananthapuram.

They have multifaceted projects for the preparation, production and propagation of creative and information books and journals for children. They have brought out audio cassettes of poems

for children. They also bring out good reading material produced originally in the Malayalam language and also translated from other languages.

Bal Kumar Sahitya Parishad (Children's Literature Association) based at Pune is an active forum working for children's literature in Marathi. They hold seminars and conferences, and also publish cheap editions of books. They have adopted unique ways for promoting children's books. Every year, the voluntary workers, mainly writers, go to towns and villages and promote books in different ways. They organize a *Pustak Yatra*, involving travel with children's books for display. They organize a *Pustak Hundi* too, a lottery scheme where the draw entitles a winner to get a book. They set up a *Pustak Khazana*, a treasure hunt for books where children participate in large numbers. They also organize 'Worship' of *Pustak Narayan*, treating book as deity. The central purpose of all these activities is to develop love for books among children.

Oriya Shishu Sahitya Parishad (Oriya Children's Literature Association) was established in 1982 for the promotion of children's literature.

The Research Institute of Oriya Children's Literature (RIOCL) organizes seminars and workshops. Besides, they also promote research in Oriya children's literature.

Ama Shishu Sahitya Parishad was set up in the west of Orissa in 1982 for the development of children's literature.

Punjabi Text Book Board at Chandigarh (Punjab) took special interest in children's literature since the early 80's. They organize seminars, publish books and give awards to writers and illustrators.

Kuzhandai Ezhuthalar Sangam (Association of Writers for Children) was founded in 1950 and promotes children's literature in the Tamil language. They have brought out a "Who's Who of Children's Literature". They endeavour to work in close cooperation with the publishers. Since 1972, the Association had begun to give awards to writers for their manuscripts and also arranged for publication. There is a shield

awarded for publishers also.

Andhra Pradesh Balala Academy at Hyderabad was established in 1976 by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. They develop children's books and non formal educational programmes. They also distribute children's literature in the Telugu language.

Bachchon Ka Adabi Trust based in Delhi was established in 1984 and serves the cause of children's literature in the Urdu language. They organize seminars and workshops. They develop and also distribute picture books.

There are several organisations working at the national level and promoting the development of children's literature on a countrywide basis. The working language for these organizations is English.

All India Juvenile Conference (AIJLC) at Calcutta was founded in 1961 by a few young men who wished to bring together those interested in children's literature from all over India. They have held annual conferences since 1962.

Children's Book Trust (CBT), New Delhi, is the pioneer in children's book publishing and the largest publishing house of children's trade books in India. Established in 1957, by the late K. Shankar Pillai, they have brought out a bibliography of about 7000 Indian children's books. They have established a library exclusively for children and have a good reference cell. They hold competitions for writers in English, Hindi and Bengali. They also sometimes organize workshops for illustrators as well as book fairs for children. In 1991 they established a training institution-Shankar's Academy of Art and Book Publishing. Through the academy they run courses in art, book illustrations and graphics.

The Indian Association of Pre-school Education (IAPE) was established in 1964. They hold conferences, prepare books and equipment for young children and publish a magazine *BALAK* which carries articles about their books and activities.

The National Book Trust of India (NBT) is a semi Government organisation established in 1957. Under the scheme *Nehru Bal Pustakalaya* which they started in 1969, they pub-

lished books for children. NBT is active in organizing book fairs in India and participates in books fairs held in other countries. They also organize workshops for illustrators, seminars and symposiums. Through their Operation Black Board Scheme in 1989, they prepared a list of selected children's books in 14 languages and recommended this for the children's library purchase all over India.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is another semi governmental organisation devoted to the development of text books and supplementary reading material for schools. They also hold a biennial competition for writers of children's literature in 13 languages. They hold seminars and conferences.

Association of Writers and Illustrators for Children (AWIC), a voluntary organisation, was established in 1981 at New Delhi. This organization is supported by Children's Book Trust (CBT) and also has its office in their premises. AWIC has restarted the Indian Section of IBBY (Indian BBY) in 1990.

AWIC has created a forum for all those interested in the development of children's literature in India- writers, illustrators, editors, publishers, book designers, and librarians. Through its activities, AWIC has pioneered a movement for modern creative literature for children, spotted and developed new talent through its writers' workshops by offering evaluation of manuscripts and assisting in their publication. They publish a research oriented quarterly journal, *WRITER AND ILLUSTRATOR*, which is now in the eleventh year of publication.

The AWIC organizes meetings, seminars, conferences, and holds competitions for writers and illustrators. They have a publication programme and have brought out collections of stories and poems. Their most significant publication is an illustrated dictionary for young children in Hindi - a project completed in five years on an entirely voluntary basis.

AWIC has a programme for the promotion of reading habits among children. They have set up a chain of lending libraries in various cities,

towns and villages. These libraries are run by voluntary workers who are all members of AWIC. For this activity they were awarded the IBBY-ASAHI READING PROMOTION AWARD in 1991.

They have also set up a reference cell which benefits persons engaged in research. AWIC also provides translation services in Indian languages and also in a few foreign languages- English, German, French, Italian and Japanese. AWIC has also established an award known as 'Children's Choice', where new books are evaluated by children. The awards are given to writers, illustrators and publishers and the selections are made on the basis of a survey of children's preferences.

In April 1992 they brought out a colourful catalogue, 'Indian Illustrators 1960-1992'. This catalogue was part of the exhibition 'India at Bologna'.

NAMES OF THE ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS WORKING FOR CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN INDIA

- Academy for Documentation and Research on Children's Literature (ADRCL)
Contact: Mr. Provash Ranjan Day
4/2 Jadab Ghosh Road
Calcutta 700059
- Academy of Punjabi Children's Literature
Contact: Darshan Singh Aasht, Secretary
23, Opposite Punjabi University
Patiala 1147002
Punjab
- All India Juvenile Literary Conference (AIJIL)
Contact: Ravi Ranjan Chatterjea
CA 6/11 Deshbandhu Nagar
Calcutta 700059
- Andhra Pradesh Balala Academy (APBA)
Contact: Director
34/4RT
Barkatpura Quarter
Hyderabad 500027

- Association of Writers & Illustrators for Children (AWIC)
Indian Section of IBBY
Contact: Manorama Jafa
Nehru House
4, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi 110001
- Bachchon Ka Adabi Trust (BKAT) (Urdu)
Contact: Gulam Haider
46 A Zakir Nagar
New Delhi 110025
- Bal Kumar Sahitya Parishad (BKSP), (Marathi)
Contact: Sudhakar Prabhu
1, Phare Road
Pune 1
Maharashtra
- Bal Sahitya Cooperative Society (Malayalam)
Contact: M. Sathyam
Vidharthi Mithram Building
Kottayam 686001
Kerala
- Bharatiya Bal Kalyan Sansthan
Contact: Dr. Rashtibandhu
49/68 Naughara
Kanpur 20800
U.P.
- Bharatiya Bal Sahitya Shiksha Parishad (Hindi)
Contact: Jai Prakash Bharti
A-4, Ring Road
South Extension Part I
New Delhi
- Bangla Shishu Sahitya Parishad
Contact: Homi Utpal Roy
CA-6/11 Deshbandhu Nagar
Calcutta 700059
- Children's Book Trust
Contact: Ravi Shankar
Nehru House
4, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi 110001
- Gujarat Bal Sahitya Sabha (Gujarati)
President - Babubhai Joshi
Contact: Secretary
Mr Dhirajlal Gojjar
Mr Kanu Bhai Patel
Gyan Vigyan Karyalaya Kishor
4 Deen Garshi Nagar
Ahmedabad-38007 (Gujarat)
- Indian Association of Pre School Education (IAPA)
Contact : Dr Veena Mistry
Prof. & Head Department of Human and Family Studies
Faculty of Home Science
MS University of Baroda
Baroda 390002
- Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)
Contact: Director
35 Ferozshah Road
New Delhi
- Karnataka Makkala Sahitya Academy (Kannada)
Contact: Sisu Sangamesh
Bharati Kavali Gate
Bijapur-586101
Karnataka
- Kuzhandai Ezhuthalar Sangam (Tamil)
Contact: N.C. Deivachikamani
309 Linghi Chetti Street
Madras 600 001
Tamil Nadu
- Multicultural Children's Centre (MCC)
Contact: Kuldip Kumar Roy
55 Garihat Road
P.O. Box 10210
Calcutta 700 019
- National Book Trust (NBT)
Contact: Arvind Kumar
A-5 Green Park
New Delhi - 110 016

- National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)
Contact: C.N. Rao
Sri Aurobindo Marg
New Delhi 110 016
- Oriya Children's Literature Akademy
Contact: Dr J. Mohanty
2935 Gauri Nagar
Bhubneshwar - 751 002
Orissa
- Punjab Text Book Board
Contact: Ravinder Rattan
Kothi No. 330, Sector 33-A
Chandigarh 160 033
Punjab
- Research Institute Of Oriya Children's Literature (RIOCLI)
Contact : Dr Manindra Mohanty
Champua, Keonjhar - 758041
Orissa
- State Institute Of Children's Literature (ISCL)
Contact: Dr George Onnakoor
Sudarsana, Nalanchira
Thiruvananthapuram
Kerala 695005
- State Resource Centre For Non Formal Education (SRCNFE)
C/o Indian Institute of Education
128/2 Karve Road
Kothrud
Pune 411029

(Paper read at the 23rd IBBY World Congress at Berlin held from 7 Sept - 12 Sept 1992)

AWIC

*An amalgam of Ideas
Colours, contours and calligraphy
Floated around us
So we gently picked them up,
Holding them together.*

*Write! a command from within
Right, we agreed, but write what?
We waited for sometime
Wishing to carry out the command.*

*Ideas and imageries intermingled
Danced over paper
Before settling into a pattern*

*Young, eager minds
To cheer, cherish and chuckle
We will create a pic (ture)
And so came into being AWIC
With Shankar's hearty blessings!*

- Thangam Krishnan

(A tribute to AWIC on its tenth anniversary!)